

Mayor Domenic J. Sarno's City of Springfield COVID-19 Situational Update

Friday, May 1, 2020

Mayor Domenic J. Sarno, in the best interests of our residents and business community, continues his daily morning meetings with his cabinet heads as they work 24/7 to facilitate and coordinate with all of our local, state, federal, and public and private partners in response to the COVID-19 situation.

Below are the most recent updates as reported from each City Departments.

Mayor's Office

- Continues to coordinate the city's efforts with all stakeholders (state, federal, hospital and medical facilities, public and private partners, etc.) in response of services and relief and recovery measures.
- Continuing to monitor the COVID-19 situation closely so that we do not reopen and ease our prudent measures too early, which could potentially expose our residents to a second wave of the virus.
- Continues to stress the need for additional target testing before any talk about reopening can be considered, in order to build strong public, business, consumer, and hospital confidences to identify, isolate, contact trace, mitigate and heal potential hot spot areas.
- Continuing to review the health measures and facility needs for municipal buildings to begin phased reopening to the public - will adhere to state guidance and recommendations
 - Temperature check before entering
 - Hand sanitizer at each entrance and exit
 - Limiting entrances and exits to a minimum within building and fire code
 - Install protective health measures at locations where the public gathers and interacts with city staff
- City Hall utilizing thermal infrared thermometers to proactively protect and preserve our workforce
- Hosted weekly conference call with Congressman Richard E. Neal during daily morning cabinet heads meeting
 - Provided an update from Congress about discussions of having a direct funding mechanism established for cities and states
 - Discussed potential plans to review infrastructure funding aspects
- Hosted weekly conference call with Springfield State Delegation to provide situational updates and to continue to advocate for support from the state Legislature
 - Provided an update on city's Economic Development initiatives
 - Discussed the ongoing budgeting concerns. Revenue shortfalls and deficit spending

- Discussed the need for additional testing within the community of asymptomatic and symptomatic individuals
- Heartfelt thank you to our Springfield Community for stepping up with PPE donations, allowing the city to outfit our dedicated police, fire and frontline workers with the appropriate safety equipment

Health

- Announced 96 new cases of Springfield residents testing positive for COVID-19 (Coronavirus).
 - 48 new cases reported Friday morning
 - 48 new cases reported late Friday afternoon
- Total positive cases now at 1,435
 - City continues to see a rise in cases. As more target testing becomes available these numbers will most likely continue to increase - we must remain vigilant
- Continues to monitor potential COVID-19 cluster locations across the city, especially at our long-term care facilities.
 - National Guard Med Tech through state Department of Public Health and City Health Department continue to provide assistance with our long-term care facilities with testing aspects
- Mayor Sarno and HHS Commissioner Caulton-Harris continue to push and work with the state, local hospitals and healthcare facilities with community health outreach aspects to do much more symptomatic and asymptomatic testing, not only for homeless population, but for all targets
- School nurses continue to help with contact tracing
 - Over 800 contact tracing has been done so far
- Reviewing plans to expand city contact tracing abilities through Governor Baker's continued initiative efforts
- Announced the continued need and importance of adhering to all public health, personal hygiene and social distancing procedures. Still very important, even though hospital numbers are stable, public health is population based and our numbers are still rising
- Homeless Triage facilities and operations up and running
 - 30 tested earlier this week (all negative), 28 tested today and an additional 50 scheduled to be tested on Monday and 50 scheduled to be tested on Tuesday. Total population scheduled to be tested would be 158 individuals
 - Partnership with Baystate Health for testing at city's Homeless Triage Facility
 - Partnership with Mercy Medical for testing at the Springfield Rescue Mission – Taylor Street site by Friday or Saturday; Mill Street site by next week
- City of Springfield COVID-19 hotline - (413) 750-3250 – staffed 7 days a week. 8:30am – 7pm.

Elder Affairs

- Continues to do wellness checks on a daily basis with people in senior housing complexes and associated with senior centers.
- Continues to deliver meals to seniors in need, including over the weekend.

DPW

- Trash and recycling continue to be picked up
- Streets and Engineering continue to provide services
- Yard waste collection continues
- Construction projects scheduled to begin shortly or are underway
 - Street line painting

- Street paving
- Milling work
- Pot holes
- Weekly Construction projects for the week of May 4, 2020
 - Bristol Street – paving tentative
 - Magazine Street – paving tentative
 - Mill Street – utility work
 - Union Street – utility work
- Continues to assist at Central High School Oasis Foodbank aspects

Eco Dev

- Continues to review and secure additional funding for restaurant and small business assistance grants.
 - Between First and Second Round of the “Prime the Pump” grant program, city has now awarded over \$725,000 in grants to Springfield businesses
- Continues to review and identify Federal stimulus funding to focus on local efforts for relief and recovery for our residents and small businesses
- Continues to work with HUD for spending of CDBG funds through the C.A.R.E. Act
- Continues to review costs associated with COVID-19 response for relief and recovery reimbursements.

Finance

- Provided an update to Mayor and cabinet heads on the projected revenue shortfalls by the federal, state and municipal levels. Reviewed the expected budgetary constraints for the city’s FY 20 and FY21 budgets
- Continues to explore all public and private means in which to secure additional PPE’s for our Police and Fire Departments and our first responders and frontline personnel
- Continues to monitor all federal and state relief and recovery funding and reimbursement mechanisms
- Continues to review costs associated with COVID-19 response for relief and recovery reimbursements.
- Implementing strategic spending measures to identify areas of need, relief and recovery while also trying to maintain city services for residents and business community.
- Continuing to review and monitor with the Assessor’s Department how the COVID-19 pandemic will affect local real estate sales as recorded with the Hampden County Registry of Deeds and the city’s own local assessments of real estate.
 - Real estate sales for residential and commercial properties could potentially be affected due to the coronavirus outbreak, which would in turn, could have potentially negative results for the city’s local assessment of property values potentially as soon as the FY21 budget
- Continues to monitor lost revenue – city and state
 - \$2.3 million in lost revenue – city
 - \$4.1 million in deficit spending – city
- Continues proactive meetings with Josh Norman of GP Strategies to track, identify, and implement relief and recovery reimbursement aspects.

Libraries

- Beginning printing of PPE masks on 3D printers
- Continuing to answer reference questions by phone and email
- Continuing to offer story times on social media sites

- Continuing to help residents access e-books and streaming movies and music on their devices
- Continuing to help residents learn, research, and explore, using our digital subscriptions and apps (language learning, grant searches, business research, children's homework help, etc.)

Parks and Facilities

- Consulting with Bob Kirchherr, CSP, Principal and Indoor Air Quality and Industrial Hygienist for O'Reilly, Talbot & Okun Engineering Associate to review the city's air systems at all municipal buildings – police and fire HQ, City Hall, Schools, etc.
- Continuing the deep cleaning of all city buildings and facilities
- Continuing to monitor our parks on social distancing aspects
- Installing signs at city parks recommending residents wear face coverings
- Reviewing potential alternate site locations for homeless triage facility and population surge facility for short-term and long-term aspects pending the duration of pandemic if needed
- Reviewing all protocols and procedures for short and long term reopening aspects
 - Drafting the city's plans for Phase I and Phase II of reopening the city and guidance for businesses based on pending state and federal guidance and recommendations from the medical and health experts and professionals
- Reviewing the health measures and facility needs for municipal buildings to begin a soft opening to the public - will adhere to state guidance and recommendations
 - Temperature check before entering
 - Hand sanitizer at each entrance and exit
 - Limiting entrances and exits to a minimum within building and fire code
 - Install protective health measures at locations where the public gathers and interacts with city staff
 - Reviewing air flow and ventilation systems in public buildings
- Utilizing thermal infrared thermometers to proactively protect and preserve our workforce

Public Safety

Fire

- Down 6
- Announced Food Drive to help residents in need. Non-perishable food items can be donated and dropped off at city fire stations. Residents are encouraged to call ahead or ring the doorbell and to leave items at the door for social distancing aspects.
- Continues with proactive sanitizing and disinfecting measures
- Utilizing thermal infrared thermometers to proactively protect and preserve our workforce
- Investigating fire incident by an alleged arsonist who had been released by the courts for his safety due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Police

- Down 18
- Continues to provide anti-crime activity
 - Notable arrest made:
 - Suspected murderer arrested
 - Increase traffic enforcement
 - Increase attention on breaking and entering crimes – residential and commercial properties
 - Increase in domestic and restraining orders

- Increase in mental health related calls for service – more Behavioral Health Network (BHN) staff added
- Continues with positive community outreach activities where possible.
- Commissioner Clapprood announced that training will begin for officers with the body worn camera program on May 13, 2020 and will have the first phase of cameras active and in use by May 18, 2020
- Springfield Police Academy held two graduation ceremonies for Academy Class #0520
 - 44 recruits were sworn into service for five different police departments
 - 34 Springfield Police Officers
 - 3 Chicopee Police Officers
 - 3 West Springfield Police Officers
 - 2 Ludlow Police Officers
 - 1 UMass Amherst Police Officer
 - 1 Springfield College Police Officer
- The National Guard and State Police continue to work alongside SPD
- Continues with proactive sanitizing and disinfecting measures
- Utilizing thermal infrared thermometers to proactively protect and preserve our workforce
- Continues to assist at Central High School Oasis Foodbank aspects

Schools

- To date, Sodexo has served 478,420 meals to Springfield Public Schools students since the program began on March 12th (meals included breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks)
 - 17 school sites
- Continues to distribute laptops to students for remote learning – over 10,000 are currently being given out, including to our homeless students, on top of the 7,000 our students had already been using prior to pandemic
- Following new Department of Elementary and Secondary Education guidelines for remote learning
- Continue to implement remote learning aspects for the remainder of the academic year and will review potential summer learning program options
 - School Committee adopted the recommendation of Superintendent Dan Warwick, as schools have been closed since mid-March and are now out for the rest of the academic year per Governor Baker’s order last week, for a Credit / No Credit grading system for the 4th Quarter
 - New grading policy set to go out to students and families

Law/HR/Labor

- Continues to assist and advise all departments on pertinent city business
- Continues to review and monitor all federal and state legislation
- Reviewing potential guidelines, protocols and procedures for city employees to return to work in phases as the city begins to reopen under controlled safety and health measures
- Utilizing thermal infrared thermometers to proactively protect and preserve our workforce

Misc.

Food Bank

- Continue Oasis Food Bank operations on Friday’s 10-2pm through Mr. John Foley, Mayor’s Office, DPW, SPD and Food Bank of Western Mass – serving over 3,309 families with food distribution at Central High School and Smead Arena parking lot